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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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file
*PCC*SECRET/EXDIS

TO: EA - Mr. Hummel ✓
S/P - Mr. Lord ✓
NSC - Mr. Gleysteen

FROM: EA - Oscar V. Armstrong *ans*

SUBJECT: Comments by PRC Officials on US/PRC Relations

I recently asked INR to review and summarize covert reporting on the above subject since President Ford's visit to Peking. Attached is the INR response, which you may want to glance over.

In its overall summary, INR concludes that up to June, the PRC comments reflected primary PRC pre-occupation with US will and ability to resist Soviet expansionsm, but that the focus then shifted to the issue of normalization, including increased PRC impatience.

EA:OArmstrong:lrr

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SUMMARY

From President Ford's visit to Peking in December 1975, to the end of September 1976, two subjects dominated PRC officials' comments made to, or reported by, clandestine sources in discussing US/PRC relations:

--concern over the limits of the US ability to control Soviet expansion; and

--normalization of relations, particularly with reference to resolving the Taiwan issue.

Comments through May and into June, in general, reflected greater interest in the balance of power between the US and the USSR, rather than the Taiwan issue:

--The Ford visit and subsequent Pacific Doctrine were viewed as helpful in dispelling concerns over US military strength and its resolve to control Soviet expansion.

--However, this optimistic appraisal was gradually overshadowed by a theme which was repeated with increasing frequency: i.e., the "Munich-like mentality" of the West, which combined with declining US power and influence, invites Soviet expansion. (These comments were associated with criticism of the US in connection with detente, CSCE, the "Sonnenfeldt doctrine," and Africa.)

--Several comments suggested that, in order to counter the USSR, China would find the continuation of a US military presence in Japan, Thailand, and the Philippines desirable, and might consider entering into some form of united front with Japan and the US.

From June through September, covert remarks focused almost exclusively on normalization of PRC/US relations and resolution of the Taiwan issue. Moreover, the officials' apparent preoccupation with normalization and Taiwan during those four months was accompanied by their increasing tendency to

--stress the importance of the Taiwan issue;

--express dissatisfaction with the state of US/PRC relations and impatience over the US timetable for normalization;

--refer to the probability that force will be used to settle the Taiwan problem.

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1. Senior PRC news official in HK. (Ford visit; Pacific Doctrine; PRC/US/USSR)

He favorably contrasted Ford's Pacific Doctrine ("control of Soviet expansion") with Nixon's ("contraction of US responsibilities"). The PRC will be looking for changes in the US/USSR relationship. 315/13439-75

2. Senior diplomatic official abroad who was in Peking at the time of Ford's visit, Chou's death, and Hua's appointment. (Ford visit; US strength)

Relations with the US are "moving along," but the Ford visit will be assessed cautiously in contrast to the euphoria generated by the Nixon visit. The Ford visit was helpful in dispelling PRC concerns over US military strength. 315/00353

3. MFA officials' comments to a European journalist. (detente; USSR expansionism; US strength)

PRC is prepared to sacrifice "ideological consistency" in its foreign policy to gain allies against the USSR. It is convinced that the US policy of detente has gained it little or nothing while benefitting the USSR politically and economically. PRC criticism of detente stems from this conviction. It will encourage both Japan and the Philippines to remain under the US defense umbrella. 315/00608

JANUARY

4. PRC Ambassador to the UN. (US/PRC relations; detente; PRC confusion over US' goals; Chou's death)

Speaking on the occasion of Chou's death, he stated that the impediment to change in US/PRC relations was the US' concentration on detente and the resulting uncertainty of US foreign policy. He added that the US' lack of specific objectives made it impossible for the PRC to understand the US. 315/01296

5. Same source as number 1. (Chou's death; PRC relations with US, USSR)

Speaking on the occasion of Chou's death, he stated that no significant changes were foreseen in PRC relations with the US or the USSR. He cautioned, however, that Chou was a "stabilizing influence." China must now pull itself together and create a "united front" to avoid an appearance of weakness - particularly to the US and the USSR. 315/00410

FEBRUARY

6. A PRC milatt speaking to a Western confidant. (detente; Pacific Doctrine; declining US power; US/USSR/Africa; PRC-Japan defense cooperation)

PRC officials believe they persuaded Ford to take a harder

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line on detente, and viewed Ford's Pacific Doctrine as a realistic appraisal of the post-Indochina situation. China is concerned about the decline in US power and influence since the Indochina war, and is especially alarmed by the US failure to oppose the USSR in Angola. The US, Japan, and China are being drawn closer together. China supports enlargement of the Japanese navy, and PRC-Japan cooperation on a submarine monitoring system. He believes the US will advise Japan to sign the peace treaty with China. 315/01686

7. Same source as number 1. (internal political problems and the state of PRC/US relations; reasons for Nixon visit)
The PRC political struggle will not affect relations with the US for the foreseeable future. He asserted that the Nixon visit was moved up to February in order to reassure the US. Nixon was invited to visit the PRC as a face saving gesture to him, and as a token of goodwill to the American people. Chinese leaders gave no consideration to the possible effects of the visit on the Ford campaign. 315/01627, 315/01633
8. FRG ConGen's DPO comments on CDU officials' visit to PRC. (US/USSR/Europe)
During discussions with CDU reps., Hua wanted to know what US reaction would be to USSR invasion of Yugoslavia, and opined that if the US failed to show clear resolve, USSR would take over Yugoslavia and Albania. HK 2143
9. PRC diplomat in Santiago. (reasons for Nixon visit; normalization)
Nixon was invited to visit the PRC in order to show Chinese displeasure over the stall in normalization of relations. 315/02262
10. Same as source number 1. (results of/reasons for Nixon visit; normalization)
Nixon visit increased US/PRC friendship and promoted improvement of relations. Mao and Hua intended that their talks with Nixon be relayed to Ford and Kissinger. He expressed impatience with the rate of progress in normalization. 315/02335-EXDIS

MARCH

11. PRC diplomat stationed in the Middle East. (US/PRC anti-Soviet front)
PRC hopes to establish an "American-Chinese" front to stop Soviet "facism" and "neo-tsarism." Mao views USSR as covertly nationalistic, expansionist country - to be more of a threat to the PRC than the US - an exposed imperialist country. 315/04097

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12. Same as source number six. (internal situation and US/PRC relations; reasons for Nixon visit)
The "great debate" does not extend to the policy of rapprochement with the US. The rescheduling of the Nixon visit was at least partially due to Mao's awareness of his imminent death and his desire to receive Nixon before he (Mao) died. 315/02698
13. Same as source number six. (declining US power; US/USSR/Africa)
The US remains weak. The USSR won a moral victory in Africa as a result to the US' failure to meet the Soviet threat. The present US trends are comparable to the Pre-WWII situation in Europe. It is unfortunate that the US defeat in VN coincided with a period of extreme US weakness. The situation might improve if Ford is re-elected. 315/02752
14. PRC Institute of Foreign Affairs members' comments to a Japanese journalist. (detente; US/PRC front against the USSR; normalization; US/SE Asia)
The sources felt that the MFA: 1) wants a better understanding of the limit of US withdrawal from SE Asia; 2) believes that the US is opposed to detente but is using it as a weapon against the USSR; 3) believes that some sort of front relationship between the US and PRC against the USSR is now possible, and that full relations will occur shortly after the US elections. 314/01204
15. A high level Kuangtung Province officials' briefing of leading leftist cadre in Macau. (PRC internal situation and PRC/US relations; normalization; Taiwan)
The campaign on the mainland will have no effect on the PRC's policy toward the US. The overall picture on US/PRC relations is good, but the PRC is growing impatient for a change in US policy toward Taiwan. PRC wants to stimulate wide interest in this problem among US voters before the elections. IR 6 842 0209
16. PRC Fon Min to GDR's Peking Ambassador (reasons for Nixon visit; normalization; Taiwan)
Nixon was invited to visit the PRC because of his contribution to normalization, and because Chinese believe he still wields considerable political influence in the US. The major problem to normalization is Taiwan, and China is prepared to wait 100 years for the US to accept the PRC's stipulations. 315/03230
17. PRC FonMin to a French legislator (US/Thailand; US/USSR/Europe)
He gave the impression that the PRC desired US military presence to remain in Thailand. He expressed concern over indications of a US withdrawal from Europe, and warned of dire consequences if CPs in Italy and France came to power. 315/04066

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MAY

18. Muldoon-Hua conversations (ANZUS; international situation vs. Taiwan; dangers of "Munich mentality")
Hua supported ANZUS cooperation against the USSR, but warned Muldoon that the US was "not so reliable and one had to rely on one's own strength." He also expressed the view that the international situation and not the Taiwan issue was the "major aspect" of US/PRC relations, which he described as good. He charged that the "Munich mentality" evidenced in the Sonnenfeldt speech and detente encourages Soviet imperialism. Peking 0817, 0818 EXDIS
19. Discussions between Hua and Singapore PrimMin Lee (normalization/Taiwan; dangers of "Munich mentality")
Soviet hegemonism is a greater threat than US imperialism. He is concerned over the USG's Munich-like policies toward the USSR, which are not likely to change during an election year; nevertheless, the US continues willing to engage the USSR on a global basis. PRC/US relations are good but not normal; they can become so only when the US breaks relations with Taipei, withdraws its military forces, and abrogates the security treaty. 315/05463
20. Same source as number six. (declining US power/isolationism; PRC/US/Japan defense agreement; PRC/Japan sub warfare agreement)
PRC is concerned over the growth of isolationist thinking in the US and an apparent decline of US power in the Pacific. There is still hope for a collective defense agreement among US-PRC-Japan, and an understanding between the PRC and Japan for cooperation on anti-submarine warfare against the USSR. 315/05423

JUNE

21. Conversations between Hua and Fujiyama (normalization)
The PRC expects no improvement in US/PRC relations prior to the elections, but progress could be rapid thereafter. Tokyo 8647 EXDIS
22. Conversations between Hua and Lee (danger of "Munich mentality;" US/Japan/ASEAN)
PRC officials equated detente with "Munich," supported a unified EEC, the US role in Japan, and greater cooperation between Japan and ASEAN (of which they strongly approve). Singapore 2740 EXDIS
23. Conversations between the Deputy Director of Indonesian Intelligence Agency and PRC officials (normalization/Taiwan)
There will be no improvement in US/PRC relations until Taiwan is liberated. However, the PRC will use negotiations, not force, to liberate Taiwan. 315/08353 EXDIS

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AUGUST

24. Conversations between a Portuguese delegation and various PRC officials
In various briefings, PRC officials failed to apply the usual periphrastics to the US and W. Europe, and applied them to the USSR instead. IR 6 838 0156
25. A PRC diplomat overseas who probably knew that his remarks would reach the US (criticism of US policy toward PRC, Taiwan, USSR)
He delivered a strong critique of US policy toward the PRC, citing as examples of the US' hostile action the US support of the Taiwan Olympic team and the dispatch of new weapons systems to Taiwan. He also portrayed the US as interested more in promoting good relations with the USSR than with the PRC. 315/08127
26. A mid-level official of the PRC Embassy in Tokyo to a new and untested source (normalization/Taiwan)
The PRC understands that little progress toward normalization will occur during an election year, but if progress on the Taiwan issue does not come about soon after the elections, the number of critics in China who feel that the PRC has been too patient will grow. 315/08368
27. A senior PRC diplomat abroad to a Western-oriented Asian (normalization/Taiwan/ use of force)
He reiterated the three principles of the PRC's position vis-à-vis Taiwan, and suggested that the PRC would solve the Taiwan problem by military means, if necessary. 315/08536
28. The Commercial Counsellor of the PRC Embassy in Tokyo to a Japanese businessman. (normalization/trade)
The PRC/US political relationship is unsatisfactory. Trade between the two countries will be rather limited until normalization. 315/08533
29. Same as source number 27. (PRC/ROC dialogue)
He stated that the PRC government would welcome US pressure on Taiwan to bring about direct dialogue between Peking and Taipei. 315/09243

SEPTEMBER

30. Conversations between PRC Ambassador to Tokyo and Kosaka (normalization/Taiwan; PRC/USSR relations)
The PRC is still very concerned about US intentions toward the normalization issue, particularly regarding the timetable. Chen asked Kosaka to sound out US officials, and indicated that the state of China's future relations with the USSR will be determined by

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whether Sino-US relations can be normalized and the Taiwan issue settled. 315/09541 EXDIS

31. A PRC official to a Western-oriented Asian. (liberation of Taiwan; PRC/US vs. US/USSR relations)

He did not think that US public opinion would permit US military intervention on behalf of Taiwan if the PRC decided to liberate it by force. Using Vietnam as an example, he implied that the desire for US economic aid was a weakness which the US could and would exploit to gain "the upper hand, and force a situation in which it could make demands..." He added that the state of struggle between the US and the USSR would inhibit the Soviets from launching an invasion of China. 315/09682

32. Same as source number 26. (liberation of Taiwan; post-liberation plans)

The PRC expects no basic changes in US policy toward China no matter who wins the election. Taiwan will remain a stumbling block toward normalization, and the PRC will continue to insist that the US completely abandon the policy of defense of Taiwan. The PRC is formulating plans for governing Taiwan, and: 1) will expel all foreign technicians and managers, but not until self-reliance is achieved; 3) all Kuomintang officials will be removed from government; 4) will counter any Soviet attempt to interfere with liberation by moving against the Soviets in the Sino-Soviet border area. 315/09755

33. A senior diplomatic official abroad who, in this case, may have intended his remarks to reach the US government. (normalization/Taiwan)

The PRC would use military force without restraint should Taiwan take "some precipitous action." If the US withdraws its remaining military forces from Taiwan and normalizes relations with Peking along the lines of the Japanese formula, the PRC would probably not move militarily on Taiwan but settle the difference between the two gradually, with due recognition of their social and economic differences. 315/09926 EXDIS